

HURRAH FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY!

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP



A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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SOME GOOD STUFF

A dear friend of mine, Dr. James C. Wood of Cleveland, Ohio, now 89 years old, published an autobiography some years ago under the title "An Old Doctor of the New School." On pages 125-6 I found the following story which I believe may be of interest to many of your readers.

"When I arrived in Ann Arbor in the fall of 1877 the students of both medical departments were still agog over a case of body snatching that had been publicized throughout the United States.

On September 7, 1876, the James-Younger Gang, a holdover of post-bellum days, robbed the First National Bank at Northfield, Minnesota, killing the cashier, Joseph E. Heywood, and an innocent bystander. A medical student by the name of H. M. Wheeler was the outstanding hero of the occasion. He was ready to return to the University of Michigan, together with his classmate, Clarence Edwards Parsons, for his last college year, and therefore both graduated the spring before I matriculated. But a chap by the name of Charles Edward Dampier, who was a freshman in the Department of Medicine and Surgery at the time and whose father owned the hotel from which Wheeler killed two of the robbers, roomed in the same house with me, and from him I learned many of the details of the raid.

Fortunately the son of Dr. Persons, Mr. H. E. Persons, of Marshall, Minnesota, is still living, and through

him I have been able to reconstruct the story which finally developed into a saga that has been told in and out of print and on the screen on many occasions. I am quoting, not quite verbatim, from a pamphlet loaned me by Mr. Persons, recording the proceedings of the fiftieth anniversary of the so-called Northfield Saga.

The band was supposed to have consisted of the following gangsters: Jesse James and his brother Frank, Thomas C. Younger (commonly known as Cole Younger) and his brothers (James and Robert), Clell Miller, William Stiles, alias Chadwell, and Charles Pitts, alias George Wells. Each and every one of them was as well known in his day as was Dillinger of yesterday, for the gang had terrorized the entire middle border by robbing coaches, trains, and banks with an abandon that made them the nemesis of the Middle West.

Dr. Wheeler at the time of the raid was sitting in front of his father's drug store on the opposite side of the street from the bank which was raided. When the conflict was at its height and the citizens had been driven from the street, Wheeler, together with a fellow citizen by the name of Manning, hastened to the Dampier Hotel, secured an old army carbine, and from a second story window shot two of the brigands, Stiles and Cole Younger. Younger was shot through the arm, but Stiles was shot through the heart and died instantly. The next shot by Wheeler was at Clell Miller; the bullet

passed through his shoulder and severed the subclavicular artery, and he, too, died within a few minutes.

Ultimately, the entire gang with the exception of the James brothers (Frank was later captured and imprisoned and Jesse was murdered), was captured by a posse of citizens and duly dealt with so that the battle which lasted but seven minutes exterminated as vicious a gang of robbers as ever infested the Western frontier. Dr. Wheeler, as I have said, was its especial hero.

Mr. Persons, on April 14, 1939, writes me as follows: "My father's part in securing the bodies of the killed bandits for dissecting purposes was briefly: When the news of the affair reached us in the country Father immediately started for town and arrived in time to get one of the black felt hats discarded or lost by one of the fleeing bandits. Dr. Wheeler joined the posse which pursued the robbers. He said to Father: 'Clarence you had better see if you can get the bodies of the two fellows who have been shot and perhaps we can land them in Ann Arbor for dissecting material—you see what you can do while I am gone.' Father during the night got the help of a Negro and together they dug up the bodies, put each of them into a keg, labeled the kegs 'Fresh Paint,' and shipped them to Ann Arbor.

Father said the Negro helper would not get down into the grave to get the bodies so that he had to do that himself. Sometime after Father and Dr. Wheeler returned to college for the fall term, friends of one of the slain bandits came to Ann Arbor and demanded the body, which, according to state law, was surrendered. The second body was dissected by Wheeler and Persons. For many years Dr. Wheeler preserved the skeleton, which he kept in his office at Grand Forks, North Dakota—or until some fifteen years ago when his office burned and the skeleton with it, which again revived the Northfield bank robbery with its tragic ending.

To the best of my recollection Dr. Dampier was a member of the resurrection party, for he distinctly told me that they did not know at what moment they would be shot by some left-over member of the murderous

gang. Dampier was a quiet sort of a chap, typically Western and not given to bragging."

—Walter F. Tunks

CAPT. FREDERICK WHITTAKER

Our long time contributor, Capt. Frederick Whittaker, met with a tragic death in the supposed accidental discharge of his revolver on Monday, May 13th at his residence in Mount Vernon, N. Y. Captain W. was a gentleman of many accomplishments. He served creditably in the War for the Union, wherein he won his title. He produced several books—one of which, the "Life of General Custer" created considerable remark. He was connected in a Literary or editorial way, with several well known periodicals, the Galaxy, Army & Navy Journal, Young New Yorker, etc., etc. As a writer of popular fiction, Captain Whittaker is best known by his contributions to our Dime Library—for which he produced 33 romances, and to our—Half Dime Library, to which he contributed twelve numbers. He was also a welcome writer to our old "Dime Novels" series, in the field of historic romances, and wherein he was especially successful.

Capt. Whittaker and Capt. Mayne Reid, were intimates, and after the latter left this country his friend acted as his agent and purveyor.

(The above was taken from the New York Weekly, June 22nd, 1889.)

REMINISCENCES IN NOVELANIA PAST AND PRESENT

Part 3

by W. M. Burns

About two years ago, while coming home from work one day, a gentleman stopped me on the street and asked me if my name was Burns. On my replying in the affirmative he said that he had heard of me as Rockland's only dime novel collector.

And introduced himself as a Mr. Arthur J. Clark, of Hope, Maine, a collector of old buttons and coins, and asked me if I had any old buttons of any kind. I remember that among the various things left to me wife, on the death of her mother were two tin boxes full of buttons.

I invited Mr. Clark to come home

with me and look over the buttons, which invitation Mr. Clark accepted. And he found a few old buttons that he wanted. He offered to pay us for them, but as the buttons were practically worthless to my wife, of course we refused any pay for them, telling him that he was perfectly welcome to them. He was very profuse with his thanks and told me that someday, perhaps he could help me likewise.

I never thought of the matter again and about three months ago, I met Mr. Clark again on the street. He told me that he was trying to help the widow of his old friend, the late John Randlett, to sell the collection that John owned at his death.

Said that he had written several times to a prominent Boston dealer in dime novels and had received no reply whatever. He asked me if I could aid him in any way by giving him the addresses of some dime novel collectors. I replied that I could and invited him home with me and gave him several copies of "Dime Novel Roundup" containing the addresses of some 25 or more collectors of dime novels, in various parts of the country, only a small part of the 300 odd members of our "Happy Hours Brotherhood" of dime novel collectors.

Mr. Clark wanted to pay me for the "Roundups," but of course I refused as they were duplicates and not part of my personal file of "Roundups." As the publisher of "Roundup" always sends me a little handful of duplicates of all issues containing my many and varied articles in same. On leaving, Mr. Clark said "Bill, somewhere around home I have a half dozen or more "Comrades" that I have had since early youth and you must accept them for your kindness to me."

I told Mr. Clark that I would gladly pay him, as dime novels are worth real money today. He replied "Nothing doing. You have been very kind to me, and you must accept these gratis."

On arriving home from work a few days later I was agreeably surprised to learn that Mr. Clark had been here and instead of leaving me a half dozen "Comrades," he had actually left me "Comrades" #1 to 13 sewn together with twine as a volume and plus #14 as a loose coverless copy.

But alas! No. 1 had the cover missing plus first two pages and No. 13

had last two pages missing. Still I got "Comrades" #2 to #12 inclusive in real good condition. ("Bread cast upon the waters.")

As I did not care to collect "Comrades" I listed them out to a collector friend in New York State. This man has been a railroad man nearly all his life, and I thought he might be interested in the "Comrades." He was, and took them as soon as offered.

But as he is more of a collector of old boys books than dime novels, he later wrote me that he had traded them off for some of his book wants.

These early numbers dated 1900, laid in a Maine attic for 46 years. Now started their journey from collector to collector. I wonder just how far they will go before coming to rest in the files of some collector that is a lover of "Comrades"?

I once had a "James Boys Weekly" that had been in 19 States if one could believe the names jotted down on inside of front cover page. Some of these names were those of collectors now dead and one or two collectors now living and still members of H. H. B. as near as I can recall offhand.

NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings

Fellers, you'll have to hog tie me, I guess, in order to keep me at home, attending to business. But ye editor Cummings has been up in Maine again, a visiting here and there, so if you've sent in an order for anything it will be filled now, and you'll understand what took him so long in sending them out. Anyway, on June 3rd I left for Rockland, Maine, and spent the evening at Tommy Funderburks up in Worcester, until train time, from 11 p.m. until 2:30 a.m. next morning, as I wanted to catch the Flyer, the "Bar Harbor Express." Tommy drove me in his machine to the depot, and it wasn't long before I was on the way. Anyway, I got up in Rockland, the next day, and I went over to Bill Burns place and stayed over night. Next day I met Gil Pattens son, H. Barr Patten of Vista, Calif., and J. H. Hobbs of the Business Men's Association of Camden, Me. First time I had ever met them, and although Barr's time was short, as he had so many places to go before he

left for home, we had a very pleasant talk on Frank Merriwell in Tip Top, over the radio, and on other subjects. Said he had visited with James E. Knott of Bristol, N. H., and asked me if I had ever met friend Knott, and I said no, I hadn't, but after Barr had gone, I got to thinking and I guess I've made a liar of myself, as I have met him. He came to visit me 7 or 8 years ago, so I hope Barr will forgive me for telling fibs. I'm glad I met both Barr and Mr. Hobbs. So back to Bill Burns place I went. I wanted Bill to meet Barr, but Bill had to work, so missed seeing him. although I did take him in to meet Bills wife and daughters, June Arlington Burns and Thelma. June was named after June Arlington in Tip Top Weekly, as June was Dick Merriwell's girl friend. I spent several days and nights at Bill's place, then also up at my aunt and uncle's, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Mathews, same town, and Ken Daggett of Gardiner, Maine, 60 or more miles away came over after me, and took me over to his place, where I spent the night and half of the next day, then, Kenneth took me over to the State Capital at Augusta, and we saw a lot of nice things there, then on to Eddie Smarts. Ken and Eddie met for the first time. Then I took a bus back to Rockland, spent a few more days, and then left for Portland, where I met L. Harding for the first time. A fine fellow too, and a Tip Top Merriwell fan. All the folks I've met have been fine to me. Stayed over night with Bro. Harding, then took train to Boston and visited with Jack Neiburg, then headed for home. Spent nearly a week down on Cape Cod, Mass., with my brother and also at my aunt's too, at Falmouth. Guess I've had enough to say so I'll give some one else the floor.

First of all, we hear the bad news, of members who have left us. Mrs. Mildred Koch reports that Mrs. F. Hausman, 6747 Cooper Ave., Glendale, L. I., N. Y. member No. 205, died suddenly, the week of June 1st, a young woman, less than 50 years old. She was interested in Adventure tales as well as other old timers.

Charles Duprez also reports that Harold C. Holmes, 109 Court Street, New Haven 10, Conn. member No. 43, died suddenly June 15th, after a short

illness. Harold has been with the Brotherhood almost from the start, and was well-liked by everybody. He wrote many fine articles for the Roundup, as you all well know, his last one being in the May Roundup, Pluck & Luck No. 118. Also other fine articles that have appeared in various back issues, were—First Half Year of Work & Win, Secret Service No. 258, Shield Weekly, N. Y. Detective Library #171, Do & Dare and others, he sure was a fine writer of these articles. God bless both Mrs. Housman and Harold, always.

It hurts us all, to see our friends leave us, but we all know that they are in the land of happiness.

We hear that W. H. Garrett, one time publisher of the Comfort and other mail order mags., up in Augusta, Maine, is very sick. He is 93 years old.

Effie A. Rowlands was an English writer of Love stories.

E. Marion Crawford we find, is a man.

Kenneth Daggett, 169 West Street, Gardiner, Maine, has a lot of Tip Tops to trade for old Maine post marks. must have the complete envelope, no cut outs, also has lots of old mags to trade, such as Blue Book, Argosy, Popular, Sat. Eve. Post, Colliers, and many others. Wants post marks of Maine, or old post cards with postmarks, or what have you? Wants certain numbers of Merriwell Series.

Mystery ship Commander, Sir Charles George Matheson, 72, of the first World War, died May 24th. He was credited with being the last man to sink a German submarine in that war. His ship, the "Q19," roamed the sea lanes disguised as a rusty old tramp steamer.

Kenneth Daggett says there were 7 stories that were published in Tip Top Weekly #53 54 55 56 57 58 59 that never appeared in Merriwell Series or any other publication. He has one of them, and says it's a fine story.

George Peck of "Pecks Bad Boy," was Governor of Wisconsin and Charles Jonas (our late Bro's father) was Lieut. Governor at one time.

Bill Burns, 15 Cottage St., Rockland, Maine, has a large book 16x11½ inches, of drawings called "Done in the Open." Drawn by Frederick Remington, 1901. 27 full pages, 10 double pages and 25 or so small pictures. 1

double page colored, also outside cover colored with picture of Spanish War Soldier on it. Other subjects on Western and Spanish American War. \$10.00 takes it, and it's well worth it, too.

The July and August Roundups may be a little late in coming out, so don't be worried pards if it is, as the print shop will be closed for a short vacation.

Are these members among the missing, or what? I haven't heard from them in a coons age, who knows their whereabouts? Levi Morgan of Washington, D. C.; Al Lindsten, St. Paul, Minn.

J. W. Edmondson, 215 So Main St., Elizabethtown, Ky., lists his novel collection in "The Hobbyist," out May 17th. He calls his place, Edmondson's Museum.

H. O. Jacobsen, says he had a letter from Chas. Bragin, saying he had run across a letter of H. O. J.'s in the Tip Top applause column. At that time H. O. was 12 years old. He started reading Tip Top when Frank Merriwell was on the Stage and his example induced H. O. to go further with his education, so that he finally went to the university. He gave Standish (Gil Patten) a lot of credit for giving him ambition to go ahead with his education. H. O. was given to understand this was the case with a lot of youngsters. H. O. says, oh that we had a Standish or Patten who could create a character for a pattern for our present youth.

Bill Burns says he has a fine collection of old Dime Novels and Libraries that he'll sell for \$1000.00. Who's interested?

Clyde Wakefield, 6 Piedmont St., Worcester 3, Mass. has lots of novels

for sale, too.

Why don't some publisher of the latest Comic Mags bring out the Adventures of Frank and Dick Merriwell every month, like they do of Superman, Roy Rogers, Gang Busters and others in colored pictures. What yer think a the idea fellers?

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- 55. Wm. Langell, c/o D. L. Hendrickson, Rte 4, Box 512, Sepastopol, Calif.
- 84. Ross Crauford, 263 Henry St., Brooklyn 2, N. Y.
- 180. L. Harding, 261 St. John St., Portland 4, Maine.

Change of address to:

- 115. Edwin H. Sissung, 24A Rooklys Brooklyn Ave., San Jose, Calif.
- 22A. Irene M. Chainey, Box 848, Harpers Ferry, W. Va.
- 94. E. Marvin Smith, Athens College, Athens, Ala.

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Ralph F. Cummings

Fisherville, Mass.